(c) if appropriate action not taken, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (c) Department of Agriculture an Cooperation is primarily responsible for sustainable agriculture production. Through implementation of various schemes, the Department promotes agriculture development, supports soil and water conservation schemes towards agriculture expansion and consolidation, promotes expansion and strengthening of agriculture infrastructure. These activities benefit farmers of all categories including SC/ST. As the schemes are area specific and production oriented in nature, funds are not demanded on the basis of population of SC/ST. However, wherever possible, Special component Plan (SCP) for SCs and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) for STs are carved out of the annual plans.

Measures to combat drought in Central and North-Western part

4898. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what plan his Ministry has taken to counter the recurring drought in the Central and North-Western part of the country, permanently;

(b) what is the forest cover percentage in these drought hit States; and

(c) whether there is any plan to improve environment in these States by afforestation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) It is primarily the responsibility of the State Government concerned to undertaken necessary relief measures in the wake of natural calamities. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Government by provinding resources in accordance with the recommendations appointed from time to time.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Protection against exploitation of farmers

4899. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether farmers from various parts of the country have sought protection against exploitation by multinational companies and inclusion of a